

Message Text

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CINCPAC/POLAD HONOLULU HAWAII

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TAGS:JA, SCUL, TGEN

SUBJ: THE INTERNATIONAL OCEAN EXPOSITION OKINAWA 1975 -

CONSTRUCTION HEAVILY UNDERWAY

SUMMARY: A VISIT TO THE FAIR SITE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL OCEAN

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EXPOSITION OKINAWA 1975 AND TALKS WITH CONCERNED OFFICIALS

EVIDENCE THAT CONSTRUCTION IS MOVING BRISKLY. A SEPARATE

PAVILLION IS PLANNED FOR THE U.S. . EXPO OFFICIALS ARE WORKING

QUIETLY TO ASSUAGE OPPOSITION TO THE EXPO AND PRAISE THE COOPERATION

OF U.S. MILITARY AUTHORITIES. THEY ALSO DESCRIBE ECONOMIC PLANNING

AND CONSTRUCTION TO AVOID A LET-DOWN IN THE POST-EXPO PERIOD.

END SUMMARY.

1. OUR VISIT TO THE EXPO SITE ON THE MOTOBU PENINSULA SEPTEMBER 23

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SHOWED SOME STARTLING DIFFERENCES FROM THE ALMOST UNDISTURBED LAND-

SCAPE SEEN DURING OUR VISIT WITH MESSRS. CLARKE AND DYER OF USIA AUGUST 7. THE SITE CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR MAINTAINED THAT ALTHOUGH TIMING WAS TIGHT, THEY WERE WELL ON COURSE. MOST OF THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION SITES FOR THE EXHIBITION CLUSTERS HAVE NOW BEEN BULLDOZED

OUT AND TEMPORARY ACCESS ROADS PUT IN. THEY POINTED OUT THE WELL SITUATED SITE SET ASIDE FOR A SEPARATE AMERICAN PAVILION IN THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CLUSTER, AND NOTED THAT ADDITIONAL SPACE WILL BE OFFERED IN OTHER CLUSTERS IF THE U.S. WISHES. PORT CONSTRUCTION NEARBY AT UNTEN AND TOGUCHI IS ALSO WELL UNDERWAY AND ALREADY PARTLY IN USE. THE MAYOR OF MOTOBU TOWN, WHICH TAKES IN THE FAIR SITE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA, TOLD US THAT ALTHOUGH THE

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LOCAL PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING SOME SHOCK AT THE RAPIDITY OF CHANGE IN THEIR LIFE AND LOCALE, THEY ARE PROSPERING AND POSITIVELY SUPPORT THE EXPO. AS CAN BE SEEN BY THE ALMOST MANSION-LIKE NEW HOUSES BUILT FOR THE FORMER FARMERS WHO LIVED ON THE ACTUAL EXPO SITE, OFFICIALS ARE LEANING OVER BACKWARDS TO AVOID ANY IRRITATIONS TO LOCAL FEELINGS.

3. SENIOR EXPO AND OKINAWA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OFFICIALS IN NAHA TOLD US SEPTEMBER 26 THAT THEY ARE GENERALLY PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS SO FAR. INFLATION HAS CUT INTO THEIR ORIGINAL BUDGET BUT THEY EXPECT TO RECEIVE SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDS AND BELIEVE THAT ANY SLICING TO BE DONE ON THE PLANS WILL BE DONE IN VERY PERIPHERAL AREAS. WHILE THEY OBVIOUSLY FEEL HEAVILY WEIGHTED BY THE TIGHT SCHEDULE AND THE EXTRAORDINARY PROBLEMS OF CARRYING OFF SUCH A LARGE SCALE ENDEAVOR AT ONE OF JAPAN'S MORE ISOLATED LOCATIONS THEY ALSO SEEM FULLY CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL BE CARRIED OFF AS PLANNED. THEY TOLD US THAT THEY ARE PRIVATELY MEETING WITH LABOR UNIONS AND OTHER DISSENTING ELEMENTS ON THE ISLAND TO ASSUAGE THEM AND TRY TO WORK OUT QUIETLY THE VARIOUS COMPLAINTS ABOUT BAD SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE EXPO BOOM. THEY SEEM IN FACT TO BE HAVING SOME SUCCESS AS THE PITCH OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT EXPO IS FOR THE PRESENT AT LEAST, RELATIVELY LOW. EXPO OFFICIALS

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ALSO TOLD US THEY HAVE BEEN VERY PLEASED WITH THE COOPERATIVE AND FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE OF OUR MILITARY AUTHORITIES ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS HIGHWAY ACCESS; THEY CONTRASTED THIS WITH THE LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC COOPERATION OF PREFECTURAL OFFICES. THE LACK OF WHOLE-HEARTED PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT WILL NOT AFFECT EXPO PLANNING GREATLY, SAY THE OFFICIALS, SINCE THE MAJOR PROJECTS SUCH AS THE ROADS, PORTS, AIRPORTS, AS WELL AS THE SITE ITSELF, ARE

BEING MANAGED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

4. ONE OF THE MAJOR FEARS THAT IS BEING EXPRESSED BY OKINAWANS IS THAT THERE WILL BE A MAJOR ECONOMIC BUST FOLLOWING THE CONSTRUCTION AND HOLDING OF THE EXPO. THE OKINAWA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BUREAU CHIEF, THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S CHIEF OFFICIAL ON THE ISLAND, TOLD US THAT THEY HAVE THIS VERY MUCH IN MIND AND ARE PLANNING MAJOR CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT MEASURES FOLLOWING EXPO, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO ROADS AND PORTS ON THE EASTERN COASTAL AREA, CROSS ISLAND ROADS, THE NOW SOMEWHAT NEGLECTED OUTER ISLANDS OF THE RYUKYUS, AND TO OUR MILITARY CONSTRUCTION NEEDS AS QUID PRO QUO FOR RETURN OF BASE PROPERTY.

SYLVESTER

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